

Are You Using Your Church Social Media Account Wrong?

How easy it has become to reach out to old friends via the modern age of Facebook and other sites that we have come to know as “social media”. Maybe you have found a long-lost love, a first love, a classmate, maybe even discovered a relative while using social media. That is the intention after all of creating such social accounts, right?

For a church however it is a little bit different. Social media accounts for churches should be gateways to the church website. Many pastors have been found to use the social media accounts as a personal page and there are many pictures of their family, holiday events, even fishing trips! Even though there were fishermen in the Bible, that does not apply. Sadly, many pages are created and left alone, never updated and staying the same. When building your page, create it as a business. This will allow all of the needed items to be shown on the page. Name, address, phone, hours, etc,... In the search engines, this information will be visible to those who maybe will search out for information on your church.

So, how should the social accounts of a church be used? First of all, the pastor should not be the one operating the page. He has far too many things to be doing rather than updating Facebook or other accounts. Find someone inside the church to create and update the page weekly. This could be done on Monday and recap past events and the coming week. Updating to serve as reminders of weekly services and start times, such as, *“Be sure to join us tonight at 7:00 PM for Mid-week Services! Look forward to seeing you there!* www.yourchurchwebsite.org”.

Other post on the page should also include the church website link. After all, social media accounts are like meeting someone on the street. You see them for a minute or two and then they move on down the street (page) to something else.

Make use of the event calendar. If you have an event such as a concert, revival, special event, place it in the events calendar on the page. One, it will draw attention, two it will go away automatically after the event is done.

Avoid too much personal interaction other than good to see you this past week and be sure to respond to those who may ask for prayers, or the like. The social media billboard should be enticing to the reader as to them wanting to go see what all the greatness is about.

WHAT IF OUR CHURCH DOES NOT HAVE A WEBSITE?

Sadly, far too many churches do not have a website and rely only upon Facebook to reach the members and potential members of the church. Did you know that in the US, there are only 110 million homes that have internet as of 2019. In the US there are 126 million homes in America as of 2017 (the latest data shown). That's a difference of 16 million homes.

Now, According to Pew Research Center, 71% of U.S. adults use the platform... The same study finds that teenagers in low-income homes are more likely to use Facebook ... and the average age of the highest users of Facebook are 13-17 years old. People over the age of 50 are less likely to be on Facebook, however the number of seniors using the platform is growing a little.

During the COVID-19 outbreak many churches have relied upon Facebook to reach "the multitudes". In speaking with people who have taken the opportunity to view church services on a regular basis via Facebook we found that few watched entire services. They would see a little here, bounce to another church page and see their stream.

One gentleman in particular wrote to me saying:

"I will start at 10:30 and watch my preacher for however long he's on, usually 20-30 minutes. Then at 11:00 I watch a preacher in Alabama. After about 15 minutes I decide whether or not I'm connecting with him so to speak, then I watch another preacher on a friend's page. I usually there for 15 minutes. Then I'm closing out the hour drifting around watching local preachers or from other parts of the country I'd say on average 2-5 minutes each depending on whether they ring my bell or not. Then I have a very old-fashioned preacher that I watch at noon usually 15/20 minutes."

It's almost like having a revolving door in your church sanctuary. There are so many distractions in a social setting. You may be watching a sermon and a pop-up message appears "you will never guess what our baby did!" and there's a picture... you just have to look. After all, who doesn't enjoy a good baby picture!

With a website being used by your church, you eliminate the revolving door effect of Facebook. But then again, Facebook is free. Just remember, you get what you pay for. One company that offers live streaming services recently wrote that more people are going to church more than ever before thanks to Facebook Live... well, that may be true, but in the in and outs they are doing like our friend above,

what are they getting? A morsel here, a morsel there. Not a full meal so to speak.

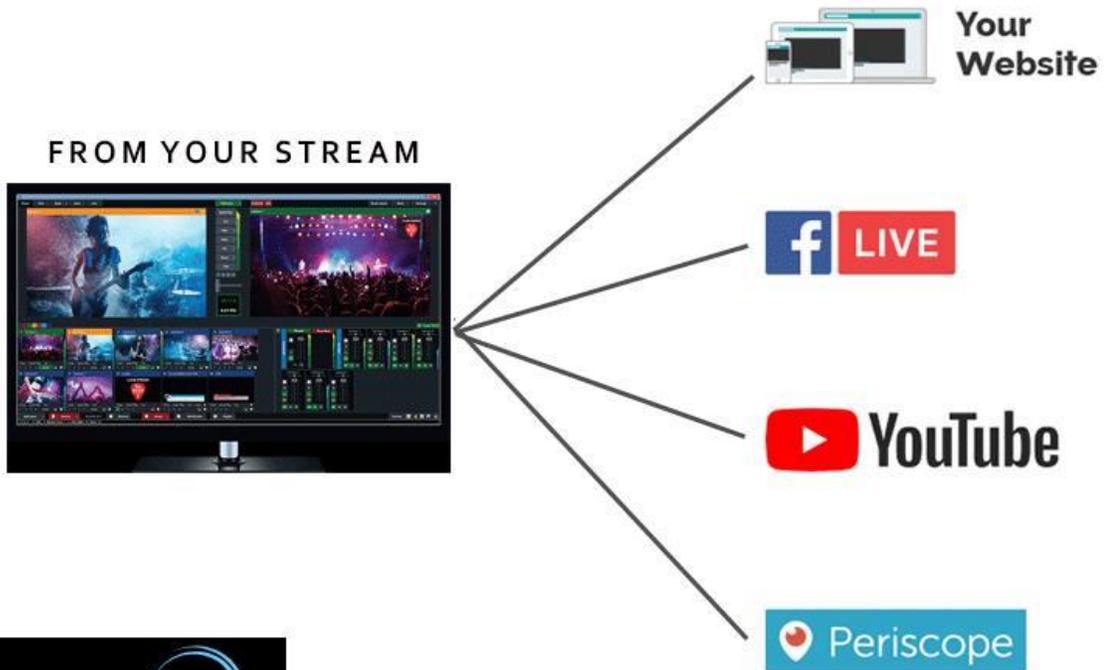
IT IS GOOD TO LINK YOUR WEBSITE TO SOCIAL MEDIA ACCOUNTS

Just because you have a church website, it does not mean to abandon the social media area of the web. Link them together! Did you know that you can add your social media feed to your website? Yes, you can! Not just a symbol, but put the actual feed from your Facebook page on a page or “widget” used in your website.

If you use a WordPress site, you can search for addons by typing in Facebook in the search bar. It will bring up many different parts of Facebook you can include in your church website. You can even show your live stream on your website and on Facebook and YouTube at the same time... using only one code. This is called Simulcasting and offered by many different streaming companies. Here at SGMDigitalTV.com we even offer an added feature, Amazon Fire TV. We assist you in the app and placement to get your own channel on Amazon apps.

SGMDigitalTV.com began in 2008 when live streaming was grainy and equipment used was primitive. Using another platform to send out the streams from the local church we evolved into a full-service business in a little over a year when one other church came to us and asked “can you help us do this too?” We did and still serve that church to this day. From live concerts, to church camp meetings we assist in every aspect of making sure your stream goes off without a hitch. Each streaming service comes with a FREE website with Simulcasting to various platforms. We can assist you in getting the equipment at a fraction of the cost, and provide to you the VMix software to assist you in producing the best possible stream on Sunday Mornings that you can do. If we can be of service to you, please don’t hesitate to call us. Our phones are always available to you.

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